



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **USDA BREAKS GROUND ON NEW, STATE-OF-THE-ART PLANT INSPECTION FACILITY**

MIAMI, Jan. 23, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today broke ground for the construction of its new 45,000-square-foot plant inspection facility. At this new location, APHIS inspectors will inspect, process and certify the ever-growing number of imported plants arriving in Miami--the nation's busiest port of entry for propagative plants.

"Inspectors at APHIS' plant inspection stations play a critical role in protecting American agriculture by ensuring that plants imported into the United States are free of harmful pests and diseases," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs mission area. "Construction of this \$25 million, state-of-the-art facility represents USDA's commitment to meeting the increasing demand for inspection services while protecting Florida's \$87 billion agriculture industry and environmental resources."

Since 1994, the number of plants processed through Miami has increased by about 13 percent per year. The inspection area of the new facility will be nearly double the size of the current building and enable USDA to better meet the need for plant inspection and processing services.

One of 17 plant inspection stations nationwide, APHIS' Miami Inspection Station processes more than 74 percent of all propagative plant material imported into the United States. Eighty-four percent of all cut flowers and 54 percent of all fruits and vegetables imported into the United States are processed through the Port of Miami, and APHIS' agricultural specialists identify any plant pests that are intercepted in these commodity shipments. In 2007 alone, specialists intercepted 1,607 exotic plant pests and identified more than 28,000 plant pests overall.

Construction of the new inspection station should take approximately 18 months.

For additional information, log onto:

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/plants/plant\\_imports/plant\\_inspection\\_stations.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/plant_imports/plant_inspection_stations.shtml)  
or [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/index.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/index.shtml).

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